United Nations ST/SGB/2004/9

Secretariat

1 June 2004

Secretary-General's bulletin

Independent inquiry into the oil-for-food programme

As you may be aware, I have established an independent high-level inquiry (Independent Inquiry Committee) that will collect and examine information relating to the administration and management of the oil-for-food programme, including allegations of fraud and corruption on the part of United Nations officials, personnel and agents, as well as contractors, including entities that have entered into contracts with the United Nations or with Iraq under the programme. Under its terms of reference, the independent inquiry may seek and accept information on a confidential basis if necessary or appropriate for the completion of its work.

The full support of the Secretariat and of individual staff members is crucial to the success of the inquiry. Accordingly, all United Nations staff members are instructed to cooperate fully with the inquiry. Staff members are reminded of staff regulation 1.2 (r), which provides: "Staff members must respond fully to requests for information from staff members and other officials of the Organization authorized to investigate possible misuse of funds, waste or abuse". Under the terms of reference of the inquiry, staff members shall be protected, as appropriate, from improper repercussions resulting from their cooperation with the inquiry. In carrying out its work, the inquiry shall respect the due process rights of persons appearing before it.

All United Nations staff members are instructed to give the inquiry unrestricted access, without prior approval, to all documents and information and are further instructed not to destroy or remove any documents related to the oil-for-food programme that are in their possession or under their control, and to not instruct or allow anyone else to destroy or remove such documents. The usual and customary record destruction and discard policies for all electronic and paper documents, including e-mail, that relate to the programme shall be discontinued. This instruction applies to all electronic files, including e-mail and information on hard drives, shared drives, floppy disks and CD-ROM, as well as to all paper copies of documents, including handwritten notes, calendars and any other materials relating to the programme.

I expect all staff members to cooperate fully with the inquiry. Any violation of the foregoing instructions could result in disciplinary action under the Staff Regulations and Rules.

04-37537 (E) 040604

Anyone who wishes to contact the inquiry may do so through the Committee's electronic address: info@uniic.org.

The present bulletin is promulgated in consultation with executive heads of separately administered organs and programmes of the United Nations.

The present bulletin shall enter into force on 1 June 2004.

(*Signed*) Kofi A. **Annan**
Secretary-General